

BOOK NOTICE

RICHARD RABELER. 1998. **Gleason's Plants of Michigan: A Field Guide.** (ISBN 0-9663251-0-9, pbk) Oakleaf Press, 920 Vesper Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. 734-668-8579. \$ 21.95. 398 Pp.

This book is a bargain. Don't miss it !! After a nice introduction, a preface with a short biographical sketch of Henry Allan Gleason, and a crystal-clear explanation of how to use the book, Rabeler presents a nice bibliography, a very simple phytography section, a list of illustrations, and then keys to the major groups of "plants" in the flora. The groups of plants in the keys include woody plants, unusual plants, monocots and dicots. While these are not the groupings one would normally encounter, they are, nonetheless, extremely useful, especially for the amateur or hobbyist.

The book contains 49 pages of bracketed keys, straightforward, simple, and nomenclaturally harmonious with the magnificent technical *Michigan Flora* volumes by the other temperate floristician at MICH, Dr. Ed Voss. Starting on page 93, there are descriptions for each family, and bracketed keys to the species within each family (ordered so the species of each genus are adjacent to each other). There are 45 simple line illustrations, judiciously chosen, an 11 page glossary, and finally, indices to subjects and plant names. There are also supplementary boxes scattered throughout the book, with extra information that the enthusiast will appreciate, such as that found on page 299 for *Galium* (Rubiaceae), the bedstraw, and for the infamous genus *Solidago* on page 331. These boxes explain points such as the difficulty of the group, recent changes in taxonomic concepts and other information that serve to encourage a user frustrated by notoriously complicated taxonomic groups. To top it off, the last page of the book is blank except for a handy metric ruler drawn on it along the edge. This is a wonderful field guide!

The cover is extremely attractive and sturdy, as is the binding. The paper is of high quality and I am sure it will weather significant use. It is obvious that the author has been a successful instructor for some time and has a knack for keeping someone interested even when keying out a difficult group. He is to be congratulated for revising Gleason's work and producing a field manual compatible with the Voss *magna opi*. The practicality, simplicity and clarity of the book will ensure its use by every plant enthusiast in the Great Lakes State, and most likely, in the adjoining ones as well (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio). I heartily recommend this book to everyone who contemplates visiting any area near the Great Lakes Region!—*John J. Pipoly III.*